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U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

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[redacted]

FILE: [redacted] Office: MIAMI Date: FEB 24 2004

IN RE: Obligor: [redacted]
Bonded Alie

IMMIGRATION BOND: Bond Conditioned for the Delivery of an Alien under Section 103 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1103

ON BEHALF OF OBLIGOR:

[redacted]

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All documents have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

Mari Johnson

Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The delivery bond in this matter was declared breached by the Field Office Director, Detention and Removal, Miami, Florida, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office on appeal. The appeal will be sustained.

The record indicates that on September 10, 2002, the obligor posted a $10,000 bond conditioned for the delivery of the above referenced alien. A Notice to Deliver Alien (Form I-340) dated January 6, 2003, was sent to the obligor via certified mail, return receipt requested. The notice demanded the bonded alien's surrender into the custody of an officer of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (legacy INS), now Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), at 9:00 a.m. on February 3, 2003, at [redacted] The obligor failed to present the alien, and the alien failed to appear as required. On August 15, 2003, the field office director informed the obligor that the delivery bond had been breached.

On appeal, counsel contends that the obligor is not bound by the obligations it freely undertook in submitting the bond in this case, and that ICE cannot enforce the terms of the Form I-352 because "its terms constitute regulations, and the INS [now ICE] did not submit it to Congress for review as required by the Congressional Review Act" (CRA), 5 U.S.C. § 801, et seq. This argument is meritless.

For purposes of the CRA, the term "rule" has, with three exceptions, the same meaning that the term has for purposes of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). 8 U.S.C. § 804(3). The relevant provision of the APA defines a "rule" as the whole or a part of an agency statement of general or particular applicability and future effect designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy or describing the organization, procedure, or practice requirements of an agency. 5 U.S.C. § 551(4).

There are at least two reasons why Form I-352 is not a "rule" for purposes of the CRA. First, the Form I-352 is not a rule at all. It is a bonding agreement, in effect, a surety contract under which the appellant undertakes to guarantee an alien's appearance in the immigration court, and, if it comes to that, for removal. Section 236(a)(2) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a)(2), permits the Attorney General, now the Secretary, Department of Homeland Security (Secretary), to release on bond an alien subject to removal proceedings. This section also permits the Secretary to describe the conditions on such bonds, and to approve the security on them. Section 103(a)(3) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1103(a)(3), permits the Secretary to prescribe bond forms. While Form I-352 may well be a form used to comply with rules relating to release of aliens on bond, the Form itself is not a rule. It is not an "agency statement," 5 U.S.C. § 551(4), but a surety agreement between the obligor and the Government.

Second, even if it can be said that Form I-352 is a "rule," the CRA does not apply. The CRA itself provides that its requirements do not apply to a "rule of particular applicability." 5 U.S.C. § 804(3)(A). Assuming, arguendo, that Form I-352 can be called a rule, it applies only to each particular case in which a person freely agrees to sign and file the Form I-352. Thus, even if the obligor were correct in saying Form I-352 is a rule, it would be a rule of particular applicability, exempt from the reporting requirement.

On appeal, counsel states that the director ignored the language in Exhibit G of the Amwest/Reno Settlement Agreement entered into on June 22, 1995 by the legacy INS and Far West Surety Insurance Company. Counsel argues that calling the alien in for an interview when there was an Order of Removal issued on November 20, 2003 is an incorrect statement of purpose. Counsel asserts that the bond breach must be rescinded.

The record reflects that a removal hearing was held on November 20, 2002, and the alien was ordered removed in absentia. The record does not reflect that an appeal was filed.

The Settlement Agreement requires the Form I-340 to state the correct purpose for which the alien is to be produced. The fact remains, however, that the district director was and is free to call the alien in for an interview prior to deportation. The Settlement Agreement does not remove the district director's right to interview an alien at any time either prior to or following an order of deportation.

Part 9 of the Settlement Agreement entered into on June 22, 1995 by the former INS and Amwest Surety Insurance Company states:

> INS agrees that no Form I-323, Notice - Immigration Bond Breached, shall be sent to the obligor more than 180 days following the date of the breach. If the I-323 is not sent to the obligor within 180 days following the date of the breach, then the declared breach shall be stale and unenforceable against the obligor.

As noted previously, the record indicates that the Form I-323, Notice - Immigration Bond Breached, was sent to the obligor on August 15, 2003. This notice was sent to the obligor based upon the obligor's failure to produce the bonded alien on February 3, 2003 .

As the field office director delayed notification of the bond breach in violation of the conditions of the aforementioned Settlement Agreement, the breach is not valid. The appeal is sustained and the bond will be continued in full force and effect.

ORDER: The appeal is sustained. The bond will be continued in full force and effect.